Melissa Brown

For a Black Feminist Digital Sociology

Brown details why it is important to bring digital methods and analyses into Black feminist sociology (BFS). Many digital forums and practices (re)produce existing social inequalities that favor dominant groups. With the "intellectual gatekeeping of academic publishing" and the rise of digital culture, a digital BFS can devote itself to learning how Black women and Black LGBTQ+ people create, refashion, and use digital technology(p. 240). Marginalized peoples have access institutions and making social change through digital practices. Brown uses her blog, *Blackfeminisms.com*, to (re)distribute BFS knowledge to those seeking BFS and others who search for Black women online.

Computational Digital Autoethnography

Nicole Marie Brown, a Black feminist scholar, devised computational digital autoethnography (CDA) as a methodology to analyze digital data using computational methods. Applying CDA to *Blackfeminisms.com*, Brown shows how web indexing and search engine scanners contribute to the internet users digitally encounter academic Black feminism. The top keyword phrase categories that led to Brown's site include "Black feminism," "pornography and erotica," and "sociology" -- suggesting a mix of intentions upon entering the site (Table 19.1 p. 245).

Most viewers of *Blackfeminisms.com* sought and found information about Black feminism and BFS which demonstrates the power of making this knowledge publicly accessible. However, many other viewers were directed to the blog posts that challenge sexualized controlling images of Black when they may have been searching for Black women with a "pornographic gaze" (p. 247).

Digital Sociological Interventions

Taking inspiration from Deborah Lupton's *Digital Sociology*, Safiya Noble's *Algorithms of Oppression*, and Kishonna Gray's Black cyberfeminist thought in *Digital Sociologies*, Brown discusses the ground work for a digital BFS. The work of these scholars and others affirms that studying Black people's interactions with digital technology produces new knowledge about society. Brown considers the social construction of virtual spaces and technology while investigating intersectional oppressions surrounding the "digital divide" and invisibility and hypervisibility.

Conclusion

If Black feminism aims to "theorize agency and promote a humanistic visionary pragmatism", then digital BFS uses that pragmatic approach to digital data. Digital BFS develops virtual intellectual projects to illuminate how digital technology has the potential to transform the construction of social identities.

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